

## PROTOCOL & ETIQUETTE ESSENTIALS

Prepared by the Grand Lodge P. & E. Committee  
Issue No. 16 – March 2012

### Greetings from Your P. & E. Committee

Welcome to the latest issue of “*P&E Essentials*”. It is anticipated that these informative and easy-to-read newsletters will be published several times a year.

“*P&E Essentials*” is intended to be an interactive instrument, designed to help you make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge. The Committee welcomes questions and/or suggestions for topics that could be addressed in future issues. Questions or suggestions not related to Protocol and Etiquette will be forwarded to the appropriate Grand Lodge Committee for response.

#### Contact Information

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#### Committee Members

The current Protocol & Etiquette Committee members are:

Gordon Crutcher (*Chairman*); William Elliott; Dennis Hawman; Michael Litvak; George McCowan (*Secretary*); Bryan Middleton; Richard Morreau; James Pearson; David Purvis; Garnet Schenk (*Editor of P&E Essentials*); Brian Seabourn; David Stevens; and Terrance Van Horne.

**With appropriate advance notice – and subject to travel constraints – any member of the Committee would be happy to make a presentation about P&E in your Lodge, or at a District Meeting.**

### MESSAGE FROM OUR GRAND MASTER



Brethren,

The increased use of electronic devices within the confines of our Lodge rooms has become a cause for concern. The ringing of a cell phone in Lodge should never happen. Also, the increased use of texting displays disrespect not only to the Worshipful Master,

but to all brethren present.

I have asked R.W. Bro. Crutcher to prepare the following message regarding the use of electronic devices and sincerely hope that you will take heed and act accordingly. I would encourage every Worshipful Master to make an announcement at the beginning of each meeting regarding these devices.

I thank R.W. Bro. Crutcher for the opportunity to pass this message to you through the medium of *P&E Essentials*.

Fraternally,

D. Garry Dowling  
Grand Master

### CELL PHONE ETIQUETTE

How did freemasonry ever get along without cell phones for our first 900 years? Rather nicely, actually.

The presence of electronic devices in our lodge rooms has, unfortunately, become very common. What is their place in lodge? Well, as long as:

- They don't ring,
- You don't check your e-mail,
- You don't send text messages,
- You don't use your browser,
- They don't contain excerpts from our rituals and ceremonies

they may have one use. That use is for emergency calls only, (should such a need arise) – provided your phone is set to vibrate instead of ring.

The solemnity of our Degrees should never be disturbed by a ringing phone. You are doing a great disservice not only to the candidate, but also to every other brother in the room – most especially to the brother who is conducting ritual.

A ringing phone at a **Masonic Memorial Service** is also to be avoided. It can negate the favourable impact we work so hard to leave with the family and friends.

**Please share this newsletter with other members of your Lodge – and your Masonic friends**

One thoughtless, discourteous act by a single brother can spoil the occasion for so many.

You may think no one else is aware that you are texting or e-mailing in lodge but rarely is such the case. You can quickly become a distraction.

Should a phone ring in lodge, it is completely within the Worshipful Master's authority to order the brother to leave the lodge room. It is up to the Master to decide whether or not to readmit that brother before the meeting ends.

**Notes:**

- Section 281 of our Constitution prohibits the reproduction of our ritual by any electronic means.
- Should a brother disturb the harmony of the lodge, Section 295 empowers the Master to order him to leave the lodge room.
- If there is the possibility of receiving an emergency call while at a lodge meeting, alert the Master beforehand. He MAY permit you to leave the lodge room "without ceremony" to answer such a call.



## Book of the Work

The 2012 edition of the Book of the Work is now available from the Grand Lodge Office in Hamilton.

While the ritual itself has not changed, the new version contains several additional pages of rubrics, all designed to help standardize how Degrees should be conducted throughout our Grand Jurisdiction.

### MULTIPLE VOLUMES OF THE SACRED LAW

There have been several enquiries lately concerning the placement of additional Volumes of the Sacred Law on our altar. The Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario has promulgated applicable procedures for our constituent lodges. These can be found in the *Questions & Answers* booklets, published by our Grand Lodge in 2004 and 2006, and edited by our Past Grand Master, M. W. Bro. C. Edwin Drew when he was our Custodian.

There are four Q&A's in these booklets which pertain to this topic. For your ready reference, these Q&A's have been reproduced following:

You can request a direct e-mail subscription to *P. & E. Essentials* from: [Gordon@Crutcher.ca](mailto:Gordon@Crutcher.ca)

## GENERAL QUESTIONS SECTION

8. *Q. If a (?) has another book of faith, how is it placed?*

- A. It is permissible to interpose the Holy Book of Faith of the (?), on the V.O.T.S.L. and under the S & Cs. (See *Guidelines for Officers*, p. 6, No. 2.)

72. *Q. May another book of faith be placed on the A., in addition to the V.O.T.S.L.?*

- A. In the Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario most lodges, but not all, use the King James Version of the Holy Bible as the V.O.T.S.L. Freemasonry, however, is universal and other Grand Lodges choose to use other Holy Books as their V.O.T.S.L. Our Grand Lodge simply seeks from petitioners their belief in the existence of a Supreme Being.

When we have a (?) whose faith emanates from another Holy Book, it is permissible to interpose this Holy Book between the V.O.T.S.L. and the S & Cs for the Ob. After the Ob., the Holy Book is closed but left on the Altar. Further, the lodge may decide to place this Holy Book (or Books) on the Altar, but not opened, whenever the Lodge is at work.

It is a matter of extreme importance that we extend this courtesy to our members, and honour our commitment to universality.

## ENTERED APPRENTICE DEGREE SECTION

51. *Q. If a (?) has another Book of Faith, (a) how is it placed, and (b) where is it opened?*

- A. The Holy Book of the candidate may be:  
(a) Placed between the V.O.S.L. and the S & Cs for the Ob. (See the *Guidelines for Officers*, p. 6, No. 2.)

(b) Opened at a place chosen by the (?).

The first part of these instructions also apply when a presentation copy of the V.O.S.L. [i.e. one which will be given to the (?) at the conclusion of the degree], is used for the Ob.

52. *Q. What is the hand placement when the candidate has another Book of Faith?*

- A. As called for in the ritual, the L.H. supporting . . . and the R.H. covering. (See the *Book of the Work*, p. 56.)

It should be emphasized that when another Book of Faith is used for the Ob., or when a presentation copy of the V.O.S.L. is used, the candidate's L.H. is placed beneath **both** books and not between the large V.O.S.L. and the other copy.